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SOURCE Laka Industrija (Light Industry), Vol II, No 1, 1949.POPPIES FOR EXPORT AND DRUG MANUFACTURE

Opium poppies are cultivated on a large scale in the Vojvodina and in Macedonia. Conditions for their growth are especially favorable in Macedonia. Large areas on both sides of the Vardar, south and east of an imaginary line through Kumanovo, Skoplje, and Prilep, are planted in poppies. The quality of the opium varies according to the region from which it comes: inferior if grown in the east, and better if from the west.

The poppies are cultivated chiefly in Zegligovo, Kavadar, Negotin, Orce Prije, Radoviste, and Strumica Srez.

In Macedonia, two varieties of poppies are cultivated: one with a white flower and white seeds in a closed pod, the other purple, with black seeds in pods which split when ripe. Both varieties are used in production of opium, but the white has a greater morphine content and is cultivated most. In the Vojvodina, the poppy with the purple flower, which is used exclusively as an ingredient in various breads and as an oilseed, is cultivated.

The poppy is a winter crop and, very rarely, a spring crop in Macedonia. Weather conditions there are favorable for its growth, because of the mild autumn and winter, ample rainfall, summer heat, and fertile soil sheltered from wind. The opium harvest generally takes place in June.

Kavadar opium is the best in the world, as it contains 14 to 15 percent morphine. Further experiments in Yugoslav experimental stations have resulted in the development of several new varieties of poppies, one of which has a 21.62-percent morphine content.

Opium is used as a source of various alkaloids, morphine, codeine, diacine, heroin, and about 20 other alkaloids. As a raw material and export item, it occupies an important place in the Yugoslav economy.

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